



Greenie League Baseball Coaching Manual



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Section 1: I volunteered to coach...now what?

Listed below are some tips to help coaches for the upcoming season:

1.1 Learn the league specific rules and policies.

- 1.1.1 As the coach, it is essential you attend pre-season organizational meetings and make sure you read and understand the league rules. Be sure your assistant coach understands the rules as well. Pre-season meetings are a great time to get clarification on rules and policies you may not fully understand.

1.2 Understand the value of your assistant.

- 1.2.1 Assistants not only help run practice, but they can also serve as a sounding board for you and for the players as well. Be sure to maintain an open line of communication between you and your assistant.

1.3 Have a parent from the team volunteer to be the team parent.

- 1.3.1 Designating someone for this position lets them feel like they're a greater part of the team. The team parent takes on the duties of organizing who will provide snack for each game, plan team activities and so forth. Having another parent focus on these things will allow you to concentrate on coaching.

1.4 Hold a team meeting at/before the very first practice.

- 1.4.1 Use this time to introduce yourself and your assistant. It is also the perfect time for parents of the team to meet and get to know each other. During this meeting you should make the parents aware of the league rules and policies so they will understand your coaching philosophy. At this time you should also let them know your expectations of the players and the parents. Be sure to explain the importance of players and parents exhibiting good sportsmanship. Make sure to find out from parents if their child has any medical conditions you should be aware of in the event of an emergency during a practice or game. Address any potential scheduling conflicts. Do this by finding out what other activities the players are involved in and find out from parents ahead of time what days could potentially be problematic for them regarding practices or games. Make it known to parents it is expected for all players to attend all practices and games, and if they are unable to, you should be notified in advance. Take the time to go over GRPD's Parent's Code of Ethics (located on the following page).



1.5 Build a solid rapport with each player.

- 1.5.1 This is easily accomplished by getting to know everyone's name as quickly as possible. During practice, spend a few minutes with each child. Address them by their name and compliment them when they do something well. Name tags for players during the first few practices can help everyone get acquainted more easily if they are not familiar with one another.

1.6 Coach by walking around.

- 1.6.1 This provides a greater opportunity to bond with each player; the more you do it, the more comfortable they will begin to feel. Also in doing this, you are more likely to better understand the differences between each child and find specific ways to motivate them.

Section 2: Team Management

2.1 Discipline

2.1.1 It is not necessary to have an extensive set of rules for the team; instead, have a few rules stand out that you will emphasize throughout the course of the season.

2.1.1a Examples

- Having players show up at a specified time before practices and games.
- Letting you know ahead of time if a player will not be able to make a practice/game.
- Players and parents are expected to exhibit sportsmanlike behavior at all times.

2.2 Rotating Players / Playing Time

2.2.1 It is beneficial to learning the game of baseball and skill development if all players play different positions throughout the season. Regardless of skill level, all players should have the opportunity to play each position in the field. Players at this age should not solely be focused on learning one position. Each player should also be given the chance to play at least 2 innings in the field.

2.3 Running up the Score

2.3.1 There are times when games can become one-sided and one team scores a much more significant amount of runs than the other. In this instance, do not allow your team to continue to run up the score. Rather than continuously sending runners, let players just take one base at a time.

2.4 Losing Games

2.4.1 Enduring a losing season is one of the greater challenges a coach faces. Rather than dwell on the negativity associated with losing, it is your job as the coach to remain upbeat and positive. Find something the team did well and focus on that. Praise them for the effort they put forth in spite of the loss.

2.5 Have Fun

2.5.1 One of the most important elements in youth sports is to have fun. Keeping players engaged while they're learning and not taking yourself too seriously will lead to a more fun experience for everyone.

2.6 Sportsmanship

2.6.1 Teaching players the value of good sportsmanship is one of the most important aspects of coaching youth sports. Good sportsmanship should be shown to all player, coaches and officials.



2.7 Parents

2.7.1 As a coach you will have to deal with various issues and concerns from parents, ranging from playing time to game strategies. How you handle these things as they come up can affect the course of the season. During your first team meeting, let it be known to parents the best times to approach you. When they do come to you with a concern, let them say their piece – uninterrupted – and tell them you'll think about their suggestions and figure out a way to best address their concerns. Always respond in a positive, non-confrontational manner and make sure things do not get out of hand.

Section 3: Parent's Code of Ethics

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports events.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of each child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will support the coaches and officials working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all Greenville Recreation & Parks Department's youth sports events.
- I will remember the game is for youth—not adults.
- I will do my best to make the youth sports experience fun for my child.
- I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, assisting with coaching or character development or providing transportation.
- I will treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect.

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in Greenville Recreation & Parks Department's youth sports by following the Parent's Code of Ethics. I understand failure to comply could result in my suspension from youth sports events.

Section 4: Running an Efficient Practice

4.1 An organized and efficiently run practice allows you to get more accomplished than expected. Some tips for running an efficient practice are below:

- 4.1.1 Be organized and have a plan.
 - 4.1.1a** Have a back-up plan just in case some drills are not being picked up as easily by the players.
- 4.1.2 Break down the practice hour into 15 or 20 minute blocks.
 - 4.1.2a** Start and stop each block with a summary of skills learned.
 - 4.1.2b** Include water and bathroom breaks.
- 4.1.3 Keep things moving so the players are engaged and on the go.
 - 4.1.3a** Lessen the number of drills involving players just standing around. This decreases the likelihood of players getting bored and losing focus.
 - 4.1.3b** If you have to stop practice to teach a fundamental, put yourself on the clock. Make your point, keep it short, and keep the action moving.
- 4.1.4 Keep practice interesting and fun.

4.2 Practice Plans

Below are sample practice plans for 4-6 year olds and 7-8 year olds. Practice material resources can be found using www.littleleaguecoach.org. You must register to use this free service.

4-6 Year Olds

1. Introduction (3 minutes)
 - a. Welcome Players
 - b. Review names (players and coaches)
 - c. Focus on the reason for being there
2. Wiffleball Tag (10-12 minutes) (warm-up/fun activity)
 - a. Players run in the infield while coach tries to tag them frozen with a wiffleball, repeat in outfield
3. Water Break (2-3 minutes)
4. Grip (10 minutes)
 - a. Players gather in circle
 - b. Grip wiffleball with whole hand using fingertips
 - c. Have players demonstrate correct grip before going to spots to throw
5. Throwing (10-15 minutes)
 - a. Players find a spot and throw at the fence
 - b. Coaches focus on grip
 - c. Call players back to coach and teach stepping with opposite foot (demonstrate)
 - d. Send players back to spots to throw against fence
 - e. Coaches monitor for grip and stepping with opposition
6. Water Break (2-3 minutes)
7. Run the Bases (5 minutes)
 - a. Players line up at home plate to begin
 - b. Call out the bases as the runners go one at a time
8. Conclusion
 - a. Review what they learned
 - b. Reminder of next practice/game

7-8 Year Olds Practice Drills (will be demonstrated at the coaching clinic)

1. Throwing Drills
 - a. During warm-ups, make sure players:
 - i. Keep their elbow up; no side arm throws
 - ii. “paint the ceiling” (throwing over the top)
 - iii. Throwing with 4 seams (2 or 3 fingers)
 - iv. Aim for the other players chest
 - v. Catching with two hands
2. Fielding Drills (5-10 minutes before each practice)
 - a. While kneeling, have players work on fielding the ball out front without a glove.
 - i. Have players kneel down with a partner, about 5-8 feet away and toss easy “short hops” to each other. Players should have their throwing hand behind their back, catching the ball with their glove hand. (10-15 tosses)
 - ii. Have players repeat this, but now using both hands (alligator) to catch the ball. (10-15 tosses)
 - b. While kneeling, have players work on fielding the ball out front with a glove.
 - i. Repeat steps i and ii above.
 - c. While standing, have players work on fielding the ball out front with or without their glove.
 - i. Repeat steps i and ii above.
 - ii. Make sure players are in ready position; glove out, on their toes.
3. Hitting Drills – Telling players “elbow up” is not a proper mechanic.
 - a. Go over batting stance and grip with each player (possibly in a station of 3-4 players).
 - i. Feet shoulder width apart with a slight bend in their knees.
 - ii. Grip – bat should be in their fingers, not hand; “knocking” knuckles should be aligned.
 - iii. Have players get in a good hitting stance and have them grip the bat and place it on their right (right handed batters) shoulder. Have them lift the bat up into proper position (bat at 45 deg. angle) with their hands a few inches from their body.
 - b. Hitting off a tee and Soft Toss
 - i. Work on player hitting the “inside” part of the baseball.
 - ii. Keep eyes on the ball through contact.
 - c. Watch for the following during any hitting drill:
 - i. No leaning over the plate while in their stance.
 - ii. Hands or shoulder drop (looking for A to C swing); no “wrapping” around their heads.
 - iii. Head pulling out; not keeping their eye on the ball or closing their eyes.
 - iv. Stepping toward the pitcher.
4. Base Running
 - a. Run bases at the end of each practice (5-8 minutes)
 - i. Home to first – running through the bag and looking to the right as runners cross the base.
 - ii. First to second – starting with correct foot on base (left) leave when the ball crosses the plate; make sure runners stop on 2nd and not run through.
 - iii. Second to Third – look for third base coach halfway. Same as above (ii).
 - iv. Third to home – running through and making sure runner touches home plate.
 - v. Home to second – player rounding 1st, touching inside of bag.
 - vi. Second to home – player touching inside corner of 3rd base and making sure runner touches home plate.
 - b. What to look for when players are running:
 - i. Eyes up and looking ahead; listening to coaches
 - ii. Players should be hitting the inside corner of the bag; TOUCHING EACH BASE
 - c. To make the above more advanced, use base coaches and have players learn to pick up the coach and listen to them.

Section 5: Baseball Terms

Below are baseball terms all players in this age group should be learning. Throughout your practices, try to use this terminology so they are familiar with it during games and as they move on to the next level.

Back in the box – move toward the umpire

Back up – when a defensive player not directly involved in a play moves into a position to help if the ball gets by another defender

The Box – batter's box

Choke up – move the hands (grip) up the bat handle

Force – when a runner has to advance to the next base because of a runner moving to his spot

Force out – when a runner is forced to a base, the defense can tag the base for an out

Lead runner – runner on base closest to home

Pick up your coach – As a base runner, make sure you look and listen for your coach

Tag – when a defensive player with the ball has to touch a runner in order to get them out

Up in the box – move toward the pitching machine